

Dear Resident:

As a Los Angeles area resident, we know that you care about your community, and want your children to grow up in clean and safe neighborhoods. But too often our local parks and playgrounds are tarnished by pollution – litter, fast food wrappers, cigarette butts and pet waste – and our beaches are closed due to the trash, pesticides, motor oil and other debris that are left in the streets to wash down the storm drains and out to our waterways, creating unsafe conditions. This problem – known as storm water pollution – is one that we must and can do something about.

The California Water Boards – the state and regional agencies responsible for protecting California's waters – have made reducing storm water pollution in Los Angeles County a top priority by sponsoring a two-year, \$5 million storm water public education program, called *Erase the Waste*. This campaign uses advertising, news stories, special events and partnerships with local retailers, schools and community groups to inform and educate residents about the dangers of pollution, how it affects their neighborhoods and how it ultimately affects our waterways and our environment, as it makes its way from local storm drains directly into nearby creeks, rivers and the ocean. Residents can get involved and be part of the solution – with the ultimate goal of reducing pollution and improving the environment of our coastal and inland communities.

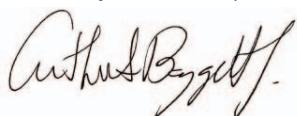
As part of this campaign, we are pleased to present you with the *Erase the Waste* Neighborhood Action Kit – an interactive resource that we hope will empower you to join our effort to erase the waste and take back your community from pollution and the associated risks that can threaten the health and safety of your family, community and area waters.

Why should you care about storm water pollution? Because with a population of almost 10 million residents in L.A. County, pollution is likely a part of your daily experience. Recent research estimates, that every month L.A. County residents drop almost one million cigarette butts in streets, parks and playgrounds and toss 830,000 pieces of trash on the ground, while dog owners fail to pick up after their pets 82,000 times. The fact is, nobody knows your community as well as you. And with your support, we can reduce these alarming statistics and lessen the amount of pollution in the Los Angeles area.

This *Erase the Waste* Neighborhood Action Kit contains a wide range of information and tools. Inside, you will find everything from tips on how to create a trash-free event, adopt your local park or neighborhood, or organize a clean up event with your family and neighbors, along with simple activities you can do with your children, and public speaking pointers, so that you can make a presentation on the issue to your local PTA or homeowners association.

If each of us commits to performing simple, preventive acts every day such as putting litter in the trash can and cigarette butts in ashtrays, picking up pet waste, using fertilizers and pesticides sparingly, using non-toxic products whenever possible and becoming involved in community clean ups, we would have a great chance of succeeding at our goal of ridding our neighborhoods of pollution.

The California Water Boards hope you find the tips and tools in this Neighborhood Action Kit (also available at www.erasethewaste.com) useful and appropriate for your family, neighborhood or organization, and that it motivates you to reduce pollution by erasing the waste.



Arthur G. Baggett, Jr.
Chair
California Water Boards

NEIGHBORHOOD ACTION KIT AT-A-GLANCE

THE KIT IS COMPRISED OF SIX SECTIONS:

SECTION 1 – CAMPAIGN BACKGROUND AND STORM WATER POLLUTION PREVENTION INFORMATION

This section contains:

- Background on the California Water Boards' *Erase the Waste* campaign
- Information and facts on the storm water pollution problem
- Profiles of those who pollute in L.A. County
- Good housekeeping practices that will help prevent pollution

SECTION 2 – HOW TO GET INVOLVED TO ERASE THE WASTE

This section focuses on pollution prevention information ranging from "Simple Tips for Individual Action," to neighborhood events, and from activities to do with children, to "Ideas for Large Groups and Organizations." Tips for organizing a successful clean up or pollution prevention event are included, as well as pre-event and day-of-event planning checklists. This section also includes a how-to sheet for developing partnerships and for reducing graffiti in your neighborhood.

This section also contains a template event flyer that can be adapted to individual events, a sample letter to solicit event partners and a sample release and indemnification form.

SECTION 3 – SPEAKING OUT TO ERASE THE WASTE

For many people, speaking in front of an audience is one of their worst fears. In "Speaking Out to Erase the Waste," the Neighborhood Action Kit provides:

- Ways to make speaking easier, by showing you how to develop a speech
- Pointers for speakers
- Basic facts and figures for your key messages

For large organizations, there is a how-to sheet for creating a formalized speakers bureau.

SECTION 4 – WORKING WITH MEDIA TO ERASE THE WASTE

The media can be a big asset in spreading the pollution prevention word, as well as helping gain support and resources for anti-pollution efforts.

"Working With Media to Erase the Waste" provides:

- Checklists for publicizing events and programs, and for maintaining media relationships.
- Information about a wide variety of media materials and activities, including a media advisory and release, pitch letter, letter to the editor, opinion-editorial (op-ed) article, calendar announcement, public service announcement, public affairs/news talk shows, media conferences and editorial board meetings. Templates and samples of many of these materials can be found at the end of this section.

SECTION 5 - INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS TO ERASE THE WASTE

This section contains:

- Informational materials such as, flyers and posters that can be used to educate your neighbors and family about storm water pollution. Materials include:
 - ▶ *Erase the Waste* posters that relate to: (1) picking up pet waste; (2) putting cigarettes in ashtrays; (3) putting litter in the trash can; and (4) doing home improvement activities safely.
 - ▶ Flyers covering: (1) pet waste; (2) safe gardening; (3) litter prevention; and (4) safe home improvement.

SECTION 6 – ADDITIONAL RESOURCES TO ERASE THE WASTE

The final section of the Neighborhood Action Kit is a resource list that provides you with further information about a variety of topics under pollution prevention. The list is divided into eight categories:

- General Campaign Information
- Organizations That Hold Clean Up Events
- General Environmental and Storm Water Pollution Information
- Regulatory/Government Agencies
- *Erase the Waste* Community Advisory Council
- State, County and City Pollution Prevention Events
- L.A. County Household Hazardous Waste Events
- L.A. County Household Hazardous Waste Centers